

December 1, 2016 3:00 PM EST
National Institute of Fitness and Sport
250 University Blvd.
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Attendance

Board Members Present:

All-Terrain Vehicle Users- Jay Jackson (proxy)
Bicyclists- Jessica Hall
Equestrians- Jennifer Regan-Wilson
Four Wheel Drive Users- Ryan Sweany
Health/Higher Education- Joan Cook
Hikers- Tim Calahan
Environmental Groups- Kevin Hardie
Mountain Bikers- Jeff Fetterer
Off-Road Motorcyclists- Rayce Guthrie (proxy)
Parks and Recreation Agencies- Melody Jones
Pedestrians- Pat Martin
Snowmobilers- David Lienerth (proxy)
Trail Support Groups- Angie Pool
Users with Disabilities- David Meihls

Board Members Not Present

Water Trail Users- Joe Rozsahegyi

DNR Staff:

Dale Brier- Outdoor Recreation
Amy Marisavljevic- Outdoor Recreation
Steve Morris- Outdoor Recreation
Austin Taylor- Outdoor Recreation

Guests:

Terry Fletcher- Indiana Trail Running, Inc.
Allan Horn- Friends of the White River
Tim Maloney- Hoosier Environmental Council
Richard Vonnegut- Indiana Trails

Meeting Minutes

Welcome

Jeff Fetterer, Trails Advisory Board (TAB) Chair, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:08 PM. He thanked Kevin Hardie for organizing the meeting and National Institute for Fitness and Sport (NIFS) for hosting.

Introductions

All TAB members and guests introduced themselves. Len Neisler gave his proxy to David Lienerth, Rick Dorfmeier gave his proxy to Rayce Guthrie, and Tim Garrett gave his proxy to Jay Jackson.

Approval of the Agenda

Fetterer asked for a motion to approve the agenda unless there were any changes. Amy Marisavljevic announced that a minor correction had been made to the first copy of the agenda. The June meeting will be on June 29, 2017 and not June 22, 2017. Pat Martin made a motion to approve and Joan Cook seconded. Motion passed.

Review and Approval of September 1, 2016 Minutes

Fetterer asked if the TAB members had a chance to review the minutes and for any changes. Cook stated she passed along a few grammatical corrections to Marisavljevic, but had no changes to the

content. Fetterer then asked for a motion to approve the minutes with the corrections. Martin made a motion and Angie Pool seconded. Motion passed.

DNR Report

Marisavljevic reported that snowmobile season starts December 1. The trails are open December-March when conditions allow. She reminded everyone that it is still deer hunting season. Since hunting is allowed on a number of DNR properties, she encouraged trail users to be careful and remember to wear orange. Marisavljevic reported that the Hall-O-Wheelin' event held at Redbird SRA on October 29 was very successful. She then introduced the Division of Outdoor Recreation's new employee, Austin Taylor. Taylor will serve as a Streams and Trails Specialist. She will focus mostly on water and equestrian trails with other responsibilities. Marisavljevic announced that the new Knobstone Trail maps have been completed and are available for purchase at the DNR Customer Service Center. Those interested in bulk orders should contact the Division of Forestry. She also mentioned that the Brown County Mountain Biking Guide is now available. The guide, which features Fetterer, was produced by Brown County Tourism with help from the Hoosier Mountain Bike Association (HMBA). It is an excellent example of an outdoor recreation promotional piece as well as a partnership between tourism and recreation organizations.

Finally, Marisavljevic announced that the current terms for Environmental Groups, Hikers, Mountain Bikers, Trail Support Groups, and Users with Disabilities on the Trails Advisory Board will expire in February. Nominations will be accepted for these positions throughout the month of December. All nominees will be contacted in January with the DNR Director making appointments in February. Fetterer inquired about the nomination process. Marisavljevic answered that the DNR needs a letter or email outlining the nominee and a brief summary of their qualifications. Nominations can be submitted by individuals or an organization. Self-nominations are accepted.

Old Business

Coalition of Recreational Trails Award

Marisavljevic again congratulated the TAB for winning the Coalition of Recreational Trails Award for Outstanding Trails Advisory Committee. She also thanked Martin for representing the TAB at the award ceremony in Washington D.C. A photo of all present TAB members and proxies was then taken with the award to commemorate the achievement.

Update on Mounds Greenway Study

Tim Maloney, Executive Director of the Hoosier Environment Council (HEC), provided an update to the Mounds Greenway (MG) project, particularly the recently completed Economic, Health, and Environmental Benefits Study. He reminded everyone that the MG is a proposed greenway trail along the White River between Muncie and Anderson, with a possibility of potentially connecting to Indianapolis through Hamilton County. The study found that the MG could generate around \$13 million in annual economic, health, and environmental benefits in East Central Indiana. Additionally, the area would see a one-time benefit of around \$33 million due to increased property values for those within a half mile of the MG. Finally, the MG is expected to cost around \$10 million to construct, which would create jobs and also benefit the local economy. The study, which was released in June, was completed by Alta Planning and Design.

Maloney stated the next steps of the project is more detailed planning, including a trail routing and land acquisition plan, with help from a local consulting firm in Muncie. They hope to have this ready in early 2017. HEC will also continue community outreach and education to build support for the MG, including in neighboring Hamilton County. Maloney also reported that Ride for the Mounds was held September 24. It was a successful recreational bicycle ride along the corridor that helped raise awareness for the potential MG.

Liennerth inquired whether the MG plan was related to the plans for the Mounds Reservoir. Maloney replied that the MG is a separate project that arose as an alternative to the Mounds Reservoir. The MG would still provide recreational opportunities and economic benefit to the area, but would conserve the free-flowing White River.

Jones inquired if there was any funding available for the MG project. Maloney reported that although there is no designated funding for the project, they hope to tap into existing federal, state, and local trail development resources. HEC received grant funding for planning and would be open to applying for other grants. Additionally, the Red Tail Conservancy, a local land trust that partners with HEC, may also have available resources. The HEC hopes that local entities or an organization would assume the management and operation responsibilities of the MG once completed. Marisavljevic commented that the study is a good resource for others looking to develop and promote trails. She then asked Maloney if he had any tips for other groups looking into doing similar studies. Maloney recommended using a consultant, as there are variety of good firms available that can help get the statistics that decision-makers want. He also mentioned using regional cities and other local plans when applicable. The study and all materials are available on the HEC website.

New Business

White River State Park Facilities and Recreational Opportunities

Due to illness, the person responsible for this discussion was unavailable. Hardie briefly mentioned some of the many recreational and cultural opportunities available in White River State Park, including the Urban Wilderness Trail. He thanked everyone who hiked the trail earlier and encouraged the group to further explore the park.

2017 Meeting Locations and Activities

Marisavljevic stated that the TAB does not have any locations or activities set for their 2017 meetings. She encouraged the group to think about potential ideas. Pool said she might be able to host a future meeting in 2017 or 2018 as she would like to showcase the Kitzleman Trailhead and bridge once completed. Martin stated that he believes he could host the March meeting in Bloomington, but will have to confirm with the local parks and recreation department.

Other Business

Jay Jackson stated that a bill regarding helmets for youth riding ORVs will be introduced this upcoming legislative session. The bill would require all ORV operators and riders under 18 years of age to wear a DOT approved helmet and protective eyewear. If passed,

it could go into effect as soon as July 1, 2017. Jackson encouraged anyone interested in this legislation to contact him.

Richard Vonnegut gave a brief report on projects that his organization, Indiana Trails (IT), has been working on. This includes five miles of the Milwaukee Road Trail in the Bedford area that is now open. IT is now the contact for the southern Indiana route of the American Discovery Trail. IT continues to promote their recently designated US Bicycle Routes in Indiana. This includes promoting them through tourism and developing color-coded pamphlets for different sections of the route. Finally, he stated that IT would like to investigate repealing IC 8-4.5 as it can deter trail development.

User Group Reports

All-Terrain Vehicle Users - Jackson stated that ABATE of Indiana greatly enjoyed hosting the September TAB meeting at Lawrence County Recreational Park and would love to do it again in a few years. He also mentioned that Ironman Raceway in Crawfordsville had hosted the Ironman Nationals. The American Motorcycle Association described it as the largest attended off-road motorcycle event in the country. This just goes to show how off-road motorcycling continues to grow in Indiana.

Bicyclists – Jessica Hall reported that Bicycle Indiana (BI) is working on their annual Resource Guide. Additionally, BI will again try to pass a safe passing and vulnerable user law through the Indiana legislature.

Environmental Groups – Hardie urged all trail developers, managers, and advocates to reach out to individuals and organizations they might not necessarily think of as traditional partners or user groups. In particular, he has found success with reaching out to cultural groups and ‘millennials’ for assistance. He has found that both groups have quite a bit of interest in trails and active living.

He also reported that the Central Indiana Land Trust (CILTI) will begin to focus on Marion County. Much of their land is in isolated segments and sections. CILTI is partnering with different volunteers to put in a canoe launch on the White River in Indianapolis in the soon to be opened Oliver’s Woods, located by Town Run Trail Park. Finally, Hardie stated he heard that there is renewed interest in the Mounds Reservoir project. Although he does not know all the details, he believes the interest is still coming from the Corporation of Economic Development for Anderson/Muncie.

Equestrians – Jennifer Wilson-Reagan reported that a lot of work had been done on some of the trails in Brown County, particularly the Story Trail. She mentioned that the Indiana Horse Council is getting ready for the annual Hoosier Horse Fair in April, where many equestrian trail groups would be present.

Four-Wheel-Drive Users – Ryan Sweany reported that fall was a busy time for the four-wheel drive community. The first Hall-O-Wheelin’, a night ride with scare stations along the trails at Redbird SRA, was a huge success. Marisavljevic commented that it was one of the most successful ORV events ever at one of the DNR properties in terms of gate revenue. She believes there is interest in doing it again, and potentially another night ride

event. In regards to the properties, Sweany reported that both Interlake and Redbird are reporting great attendance this year. The Indiana Four-Wheel Drive Association (IFWDA) will have their convention at Redbird in March. The IFWDA is also exploring permanently moving their August event to Interlake SRA. They are discussing this possibility with Carman Jackson, ORV Project Manager. Finally, Sweany invited anyone with a four-wheel drive to come out to either IFWDA event as they are open to both members and non-members. The events are a fun, beginner-friendly way to learn more about the IFWDA.

Health/Higher Education - Cook reported that she had attended a Midwest Trails Symposium hosted by Rails-to-Trails in Chicago. Several things were discussed, including a lot about funding. She announced that she would be retiring in two weeks, but will continue to fulfill her term on the TAB. Health by Design continues their partnership with Purdue extension, which allows them to offer more Active Living workshops for Indiana communities.

Hikers - No report.

Mountain Bikers - Fetterer reported that both the Brown County Epic in Brown County State Park (BCSP) and Hassmer Fest in Versailles State Park held this fall were very successful. The Epic was possibly the most profitable event the group has ever had. Both events help to raise funds to continue to build more trails.

Fetterer stated that trail building of the Crooked Creek Trail continues at Yellowwood State Forest (YSF). A portion of the trail was completed for the Epic, but now HMBA is working to finish the loop around Crooked Creek Lake. Logging near the Miller Ridge area in YSF may limit the work they are able to do. Fetterer noted the 10 O'clock Line Trail and Trail D are now open to mountain bikes. This connects BCSP, YSF, and Hoosier National Forest. The new connectivity opens up many miles of trails and encourages tourists to stay longer. Additionally, he stated that HMBA completed the Bobcat expert-level trail in BCSP. Following up on the new Brown County, Indiana Mountain Biking Guide, Fetterer mentioned that Brown County and Nashville, particularly those involved in tourism, are embracing the sport. He stated that the community support stems from a positive increase to the local economy from mountain bikers. Finally, Fetterer reported Griffin Bike Park in Vigo County opened on October 15. The grand opening and the park has been very well-received. Saturday is Global Fat Bike Day.

David Lienerth inquired if anyone on the TAB represented BMX riding. Fetterer replied that there is not a specific group on the board, however some issues and news would overlap with those of mountain bikers. Lienerth then inquired about erosion on mountain bike trails. Fetterer explained that the mountain biking groups do a lot of routine maintenance to their trails, however their sustainable design has prevented them from eroding or the need for extensive maintenance. Additionally, the groups do not build more trail than they can maintain. When designing trails, factors such as water runoff are taken into account. Finally, each trail in Brown County has a trail boss that monitors the trail conditions and helps organize maintenance.

Off-Road Motorcyclists – Marisvljevic stated that Rick Dorfmeier recently took a job in Arizona and will no longer be able to serve on the TAB. She stated that Dorfmeier has designated Roy Garrett as his proxy for the remainder of his term, except for today in which it is Rayce Guthrie. Guthrie did not have any news to report.

Parks and Recreation Agencies - Jones reported that the Indiana Parks and Recreation Association (IPRA) helped host the Trails Network Gathering on November 5. The 2017 IPRA Conference and Expo will be January 18-20 in Indianapolis.

Jones stated Westfield continues to develop trails. They recently held a ribbon cutting for the Midland Trace Trail, the major east-west trail through the community. Noblesville will begin construction going east from the Westfield boundary next year. Westfield has now completed the Monon Trail to just beyond 191st street. The final phase of the trail will go up to 216th street. Westfield hopes to have the funds to build a bridge for the Monon over SR 32 by 2018. Martin suggested exploring “High Hazard” funds from INDOT to make the current crossing safer. Jones clarified that although the bridge is already approved, the funds will not be available until 2018. Vonnegut suggested getting before and after pictures of the crossing.

Finally, Jones reported that Westfield will host the Melt the Trail, a Valentine’s Day themed 5/10K run in Grand Park on February 4. The third annual event promotes the park’s ten miles of paved trails that are open year-round and cleared of snow. Westfield now has 99 miles of paved trail.

Pedestrians - Martin reported that Bloomington has constructed five miles of trail over the past year. He also reported that Terre Haute hosted several large cross country (CC) running events this fall including the NCAA Pre-National CC Meet, NCAA National CC Championships, Nike Cross National-Midwest Qualifier, and the ISHAA State CC Championships. Additionally, Griffin Bike Park held a few trail running races as well as mountain biking races at their Grand Opening in October.

Snowmobilers - Lienerth announced the Annual Vintage Snowmobile Rides will be January 21, 29, and February 4 if conditions allow. He mentioned a recent economic impact assessment published in the Michigan Snowmobile News that showed that snowmobiling has a significant economic impact. Although Indiana is not a large state for snowmobiling, he believes the sport still benefits Indiana’s economy. Both the study and ride information can be found on the Indiana Snowmobilers Association’s website.

Trail Support Groups -Pool stated that the Greenways Foundation (GF) continues to work on getting a permanent source of funding for the trails maintenance fund in the next legislative session. GF will be meeting next week to strategize a plan. She e-mailed the GF’s white paper on trail maintenance funding to the TAB so they can help advocate. Pool and many on the GF board attended the Trails Network Gathering on November 5. The event was hosted by IPRA at Forest Park in Noblesville and well attended. Topics discussed included fencing, land acquisition, insurance, boards, trail counters, and more. She stated that it was very informative for all those who attended. Finally, the Cardinal

Greenways will host the annual Polar Express event on December 2 in the Wysor St. Depot. They are expecting a large turnout for the free holiday event.

Users with Disabilities - David Meihls reported that the 2016 Indiana Conference on Disabilities will be held at the Westin in December. It will include workshops, classes, and other opportunities to learn about various aspects for issues affecting people with disabilities. Cook commented that she has attended the conference many times and there is a wide variety of people that attend. Meihls also mentioned that it was a pleasure serving on the Trails Advisory Board and he learned a lot from his fellow members. If nominated again, he would be willing to serve.

Water Trail Users - No report

Announcements

December 30, 2016- TAB Nominations Due

January 18-20, 2017- Indiana Parks and Recreation Conference (Indianapolis)

May 7-10, 2017- International Trails Symposium (Dayton, OH)

June 10-11, 2017- Hoosier Outdoor Experience (Fort. Harrison SP, Indianapolis)

2017 Meeting Dates

March 2, 2017

June 29, 2017

September 7, 2017

December 7, 2017

Adjournment

Fetterer called for motion to adjourn. Martin made a motion and Sweany seconded. Meeting adjourned at 4:46 PM.